

imagination? To the uninformed, the blackwaters appear dark and mysterious—a great setting for a horror movie. You don't have to tell them that the waters are, in reality, clean, merely dyed to the color of tea or coffee by the leaching of the tannins in the leaves of the trees that give the swamp its name — Cypress Gardens.

might learn something while exploring this fascinating place where, in fact, the "log" might be watching you, and is

This part of Berkeley County was once home to Dean Hall,

Cypress Gardens, S.C.

and Benjamin R. Kittredge purchased the land in the late 1920s as a hunting preserve.

reflection of the leaves appeared in the blackwaters, he began to speculate on how the waters would look if surrounded by flowers. With that he began to plant azaleas, dogwoods, daffodils and hundreds of other plants. His daughter formalized and vastly expanded the gardens

In 1989, when Hurricane Hugo struck the gardens viciously, a huge community effort was undertaken to save the gardens as a unique habitat for wildlife and an educational center for both children and adults. Fortunately the community's efforts paid off, and in 2007 Cypress Gardens celebrated its 75th anniversary as a public garden.

Today, Cypress Gardens offers guests 163 acres of beauty including 80 acres of swamp and 4.5 miles of walking trails. Visitors can choose from guided tours or explore on their own. One of the most popular ways to explore the garden is in the traditional flat bottom boat. However, some choose to paddle their own canoes or kayaks across the waters to explore at their own pace.

The woods and waters abound with wildlife such as pileated woodpeckers, wood ducks, otter, barred owls and alligators.

> Underneath, the blackwater holds its secrets close, and the easiest way to see what lurks in these waters is to visit the Cypress Gardens Aquarium, Reptile Center and Crocodile Isle. In the Aquarium you'll find 30 species of freshwater fish and

17 species of reptiles and amphibians. Where else can ou spot an 80-pound Arkansas pythons. Obviously (and

alongside anacondas and thankfully) the Aguarium and Reptile Center house many

Crocodile Isle features everything from the African Nile Crocodile to the Thai Siamese Crocodile to the local natives the Aviary and the Butterfly House. You and the children will



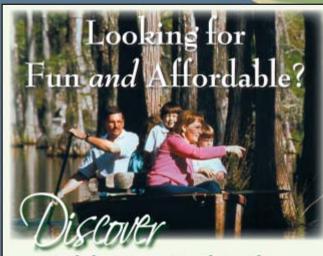
idea of getting up close and personal with these species

there are the

the azaleas. In July the Water Willows. In...well you get the best time to view certain types of wildlife, is online at www.cypressgardens.info. You'll see immediately that any time of the year there's something happening and well worth seeing at Cypress Gardens.

## Find out more in *Places*.

Turn to page 139 in the



## Berkeley County, South Carolina

Minutes from Charleston SC; offers year-round events and attractions; world renowned rivers/lakes; exciting activities for outdoor adventurers and nature seekers; beautiful blooming botanical gardens; rich in culture and history.





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